

The hate literature distributed during the NGO conference included caricatures of Jews with hooked noses, surrounded by money, and Israelis wearing Nazi emblems.

At the government conference, states such as Syria and Iran objected to the inclusion of Anti-Semitism or the Holocaust in the final report. They argued that any reference to the Holocaust would be 'favoritism.'

Anti-semitism is like the canary in the coal mine. It has always come before a hatred that spreads through many sectors of society.

At the first conference Israel's Deputy Foreign Minister sent a statement in which he asserted: 'antisemitism goes far beyond hatred of Jews. It has arisen where Jews have never lived, and survives where only Jewish cemeteries remain. And while Jews may be the first to suffer from its influence, they have rarely been the last.'

Instead of learning from history, Durban I and II seek to deny what happened, and then to twist its lessons beyond all recognition. Talking about an actual example of racism isn't favoritism, it's reality. Pretending it didn't happen or isn't important just encourages racists. After all, Hitler learned a great lesson from the Turkish attacks on the Armenians—'who remembers the Armenians?' he asked as he prepared plans for the final solution.

If we forget the Holocaust, or hesitate to bring it up, it emboldens the murderers. That's why I have been sponsoring a bill—the Simon Wiesenthal Holocaust Education Assistance Act to make sure our young people learn about the Holocaust and what happened when hatred and intolerance was allowed free reign.

I also authored and passed that Nazi War Crimes Disclosure Act, which opened up long-sealed US government records from World War II, so that all of us would know what our government knew about the Holocaust and the Nazis who scrambled to hide their past in the aftermath of the war. Eight million documents were unclassified as a result. The newly unsealed records have been fascinating—they showed that we knew a lot about Nazi collaborators who had murdered Jews, and even include a report from Hitler's psychiatrist.

Six months after Durban I, as the world struggled to comprehend the terrorist attack on New York on 9/11, which occurred just two days after Durban I's closing ceremonies, Deputy Minister Melchior gave a speech in which he juxtaposed the two events, and struggled to make sense of the senseless. He said: 'In an irony of epic proportions, this Conference against Racism itself hosted the most racist speeches and proposals to be heard in an international forum since the second World War. While doing nothing to help the millions of slaves, of impoverished and oppressed, this Conference became the mouthpiece for a new and venal form of antisemitism.'

The United Nations can do great work, but Israel often gets scapegoated by its many enemies. But as much as the UN can do wrong, it's important to remember that it can also do right. Just last year, we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the international equivalent of the bill of rights. It was the crowning achievement of Eleanor Roosevelt, who chaired the committee responsible for drafting it. It was written in the aftermath of World War II, as the world struggled to lift itself out of the ashes and deal with Hitler's devastation. The world understood what could happen when a truly

evil man who controlled a vast store of weapons was able to give free reign to his desire to conquer and destroy. They believed a body that defended human rights would surely prevent such evil from rising up in the future.

Despite the good will of a newly liberated Europe, Eleanor Roosevelt had a long and difficult struggle to get the member nations to agree on one document. She had to persuade them to put aside their own narrow national interests and to agree to a strong affirmation of individual rights. It took her three years. When she was done, we had a document that affirmed that: 'it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law.'

Instead of Eleanor Roosevelt, today we have a representative of Libya's Muammar Khadafi chairing the planning committee for Durban II. This planning committee includes such noted defenders of human rights as Iran and Cuba.

Human Rights Watch, a leading human rights NGO, pointed out the irony of Libya's position by sending a Palestinian, Ashraf Ahmed El-Hojouj, to testify before the committee. He was a medical intern who had been detained by Libya's government and accused of spreading AIDS, when he had been providing medical care. He and five Bulgarian nurses were held in dreadful conditions while the international community struggled to free them and avert a death sentence.

Madam Chair, he said. 'I don't know if you recognize me. I am the Palestinian medical intern who was scapegoated by your country, Libya, in the HIV case in the Benghazi hospital, together with five Bulgarian nurses.'

Starting in 1999, as you know, the five nurses and I were falsely arrested, prosecuted, imprisoned, brutally tortured, convicted, and sentenced to death. All of this, which lasted for nearly a decade, was for only one reason: because the Libyan government was looking to scapegoat foreigners.

Madam Chair, if that is not discrimination, then what is?

When I began drafting this speech, it was three days before the Conference opened, and it still wasn't clear which Western countries would be attending Durban II. The U.S., Israel, Italy, Germany, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, Poland, Sweden and Holland have stated that they won't go.

Some other EU members have also indicated that they may walk out—particularly if language to 'never forget' the Holocaust is taken out. But what does it say that the conference will be opened with an address by the notorious Holocaust denier Mahmoud Ahmadinejad?

The Bush Administration had been an early opponent of Durban II and in December, the U.S. cast a symbolic vote against the UN's budget because it included funding for this conference.

The Obama Administration, in the spirit in which he was elected, made an effort to reach out and to try to make the conference's report better. They figured that if we weren't at the table, we could be sure that we would object to the final document. If we were at the table, we had a tiny chance of making it palatable.

Unfortunately, in a conference chaired by Libya, our odds of success were limited. And, it seems clear that our worst expectations

have been fulfilled. Human rights are being used as a weapon of political interests antithetical to human rights protection.

Was the Obama Administration right to participate in the pre-conference negotiations? Some would argue that it wasn't worth the time, the expense or the frustration. I've always believed that you're doomed to fail if you never try. You can always reject a bad bargain—but you'll never get what you want if you don't ask for it—and you can't ask for anything if you storm out at the beginning. So, I believe President Obama was right to try change the document in the lead up to this conference. And as it became clear that the United States could never endorse the final report, he was right to decide not to send a delegation to the actual conference.

I think most of the Western nations were more than a little embarrassed by Durban I, and that Europe's enthusiasm for this type of spectacle has been tempered by the explosion of terrorism that the entire world has experienced since Durban I. I am pleased the United States had the company of many other nations in boycotting Durban II.

Eleanor Roosevelt believed that our greatest asset is the conviction that our actions accord with justice and humanity. I am delighted to be here at the counter-conference, where justice and humanity can be the focus. There is so much work that could be done at a real conference on racism—exploring ways to bring justice in Darfur, looking at the discrimination against the Baha'i, exploring why the world has tolerated a return to clan rule in failed states like Somalia and parts of Pakistan, looking at ways to combat xenophobia and intolerance.

Once upon a time, we dreamed that the United Nations could be a forum to address those issues. Perhaps in time it could be—but not when states led by the worst abusers of human rights get to chair human rights panels, and not when narrow political interests are allowed to dominate. I hope, if there ever is a Durban III, it will be convened in an earnest effort to achieve equality."

Madam Speaker, I ask my distinguished colleagues to join me in recognizing AAJLJ and Jewish Week's Durban II Counterconference.

HONORING RABBI SHOLOM STERN,
TALI DAHARI, KENNETH S. FINK,
DR. JACQUELINE H. SIMONS,
MRS. SUSAN SACHS AND THE
BRANDEIS SCHOOL

HON. CAROLYN MCCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 27, 2009

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise in honor of Rabbi Sholom Stern, Tali Dahari, Kenneth S. Fink, Dr. Jacqueline H. Simons, Mrs. Susan Sachs and the Brandeis School for their remarkable contributions to both education and community. The 79th Brandeis School Campaign Celebration will honor each of these dedicated and selfless individuals, commemorating their tireless work toward educating our youth. In helping students become well-informed and responsible community members and citizens, both the Brandeis School and these talented honorees are deserving of recognition.

Rabbi Sholom Stern will receive the Lion of Judah Award for his continued commitment to meaningful Judaic studies. Rabbi Stern's sustained and sturdy efforts help the congregation, community and school flourish. Mrs. Dahari will receive the Etz Chaim Tree of Life Award for her tireless efforts in connection with the Brandeis School, where for over 15 years she has persistently been a guiding light to students and parents alike. Mrs. Dahari's contribution as Publicity Chair has made an especially positive impact on the school as a whole and is proud to be a parent of the school as well. Mr. Fink and Dr. Simons will both receive the L'Dor Va'Dor Parents of the Year Award for their noble commitment to both the Brandeis School's mission and to its student body. From generation to generation, these alumni parents and their families have given selflessly to the school as both Mr. Fink and Dr. Simons are now proud to send their own children to the Brandeis School as well. Mrs. Susan Sachs will receive the Aishet Chayil Award for her determined devotion to both the Brandeis School and its Parent's Association. Mrs. Sachs has certainly been a woman of valor, serving the school in multiple fashions including her work as the Parent's Association President. Mrs. Sachs is also proud to send her children to the Brandeis School. All of these individuals help to foster an environment in which students at the Brandeis School can learn and prosper, toward those efforts they are especially deserving of recognition.

In guiding a student body of 350 students in pre-kindergarten through 8th grade, these honorees give of their time and abilities to a cause greater than themselves. The education of our youth will forever be a central and vital aspect of our society. Giving to children the opportunity to learn and achieve will continue to encourage our youth to explore their own gifts, talents and abilities in a safe, supportive learning environment. Toward this end, these esteemed individuals have continuously given of themselves in a selfless, fruitful manner.

The work of these honorees is surely inspiring to us all, and I am immensely grateful to them for all that they have accomplished. I ask my colleagues to join me in expressing the gratitude of the U.S. Congress for their extensive contributions to society.

NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY AND CHILDREN'S DAY

HON. ED WHITFIELD

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 27, 2009

Mr. WHITFIELD. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate National Sovereignty and Children's Day, an event that is celebrated in the nation of Turkey every April 23rd. While this important holiday traces its origins all the way back to Turkey's capital, Ankara, in 1923, it has gradually taken on tremendous meaning and significance for children throughout the world.

On April 23, 1920, during Turkey's War of Independence, a body of Turkish lawmakers known as the Grand National Assembly met in Ankara to lay the foundation for a government that was to be a modern, parliamentary democracy. They drew upon their already

emerging status as a liberal and secular Republic to guide them in the creation of their vision. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder and eventual first President of the Republic of Turkey, designated that day as National Sovereignty and Children's Day, in recognition of the important role that children would play in shaping the country's future. Atatürk was the first world leader to take so momentous a step in recognizing the contributions of children to their nation.

In Turkey, National Sovereignty and Children's Day is an official public holiday marked by student celebrations that span the entire week of April 23rd. Children 'govern' Turkey by sending their own 'representatives' to replace state officials and high ranking bureaucrats in their offices. The President, Prime Minister, Cabinet Ministers and provincial governors all turn over their positions to children's representatives. The children assume some of the real responsibilities of legislators by signing executive orders relating to educational and environmental policies. Children also replace the parliamentarians in the Grand National Assembly and hold a special session to discuss children's issues. These symbolic gestures demonstrate for children how they are the future leaders of Turkey, and remind current leaders that they are responsible for the well being of these children and the nation that they will inherit.

On April 27, 1986, a tradition that began in Turkey was brought to the entire world when the UN General Assembly was opened to children for the first celebration of World Children's Day. Later that same year, the World Children's Day Foundation (WCDF) was established to oversee World Children's Day activities. The program's goals were to equip children to make a difference in their own lives and the future of their communities and nations; bring children of different nationalities, races, religions, and socio-economic backgrounds together and to show them that, in spite of these factors, all people have much in common; and establish the fourth Sunday in April as the internationally celebrated World Children's Day to recognize the capability and potential of children everywhere to shape the future.

Madam Speaker, our children are our most precious resource, and I believe we all should join together in commemorating this important date dedicated to them. We also should commend Turkey for leading the way in being the first government to set aside one day each year to honor its children some eighty-six years ago.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE YOUNG MARINES

HON. CHRISTOPHER S. MURPHY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 27, 2009

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 50th Anniversary of the Young Marines. I am honored to represent the proud and patriotic City of Waterbury, Connecticut where the first Young Marines Unit was founded in 1959 by members of the Brass City Memorial Detachment of the Marine Corps League. Just three years later, the ranks of Waterbury's Young

Marines had swelled to 1,500 and spread to 9 other cities all because of the fine young men from Waterbury.

In 1974, Waterbury's own Young Marine program was chartered as a subsidiary organization of the Marine Corps League, whose mission is to preserve the traditions and promote the interests of one of our very finest institutions, the United States Marine Corps.

The Young Marines embody our core values as Americans—honesty, fairness, courage, respect, loyalty, and love of country. These principles are instilled on the Young Marines by the steady hand of hundreds of volunteers from communities all over the country, many of whom are former, retired, Active Duty, or Reservist Marines who believe passionately in the values they learned during their service. I can think of no better mentors for these youngsters.

Many of my district's finest and most involved citizens are products of the Young Marines; some went on to join our nation's Armed Forces, others found another way to serve their community. In 1960, a young man named Sam Beamon joined the Young Marines with his brothers. After graduating from high school, he went on to serve honorably in the United States Marine Corps in Vietnam. Sam is now active in many veterans' organizations and is the State Commandant of the Marine Corps League, Department of Connecticut.

Since its inception, the Young Marines have sponsored many initiatives to improve their communities. I stand here honored to represent those seminal Young Marines from Waterbury, Connecticut whose organization went on to take a leadership role in the U.S. Marine Youth Drug Demand Reduction Program in 1993. This community-based program sought to reduce the impact of harmful drugs on our communities and encouraged other youths to live a drug-free lifestyle. The values of this program are perfectly aligned with those of the Young Marines, and communities around the country are lucky to have such respected advocates for clean and healthy living.

In 2006, the Young Marines, now a nationally respected organization, conducted the Veterans Appreciation Week campaign, which sought to challenge Young Marines throughout the country to dedicate some of their time to honor our nation's veterans and to demonstrate, through their actions, their sincere appreciation for our veterans' service to our country. In a time when fewer Americans seem to be aware of the sacrifices that our veterans made, I am glad that we can look to the Young Marines to provide leadership on how we should honor those who have served.

Here, on this the 50th Anniversary of this vital and impressive organization, we are reminded of its mission statement: the Young Marines' mission is to positively impact America's future by providing quality youth development programs for boys and girls that nurture and develop its members into responsible citizens who enjoy, and promote, a healthy, drug-free lifestyle. On Saturday April 25th, Young Marines and former Young Marines from across the nation came to the organization's birthplace to join several of the members of the Marine Corps League Brass City Memorial Detachment who established the Young Marines. I would like to congratulate Ray Bozzuto, Art Corcoran, Roland Hamel, Tony Szantyr, Ed Zuraitis, and the other founding members on the legacy of patriotism and civic